THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI); Ministry of Industries have issued a letter of intent to M/s. Alkabeer Ltd., Rudraram village, Tehsil Pacaneheru Mandal, Distt. Medak (Andhra Pradesh) for processing buffalo meat for the purpose of export. According to this letter, the firm is authorised to slaughter only the old and useless buffaloes.

Programmes to meet the problem presented by ozone hole glasshouse effect and acid rains

716. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

Whether it is a fact that India is not fully geared yet to meet the colossal problem presented by Ozone Hole, glasshouse effect and Acid Rains and if so, what time bound programmes have been drawn up to meet the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): Though there is scientific evidence to the effect that depletion of the Ozone layer leads to skin cancer, eye diseases and immune deficiencies in human beings and animals besides other adverse effects on human and plant life, there is no scientific observation of either a significant depletion of the ozone layer or the existence of a ozone hole over India.

The Government have set up an Expert Advisory Committee to analyse the impact of the greenhouse effect and its implications for India,

There are no confirmed reports of any incidence of acid rain in India. The free dust in the atmosphere has a buffering action which neutralizes the acidity of precipitation over India. The efforts made by the Government and the Industries to control air pollution from industries also keeps in check the possibility of industrial pollutants producing acid rain in the country.

Environment pollution in Delhi

717. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government attention has been drawn to the most revealing newsre-port by Neelam Mathews in Network of October, 1990 concerning Delhi which has emerged as the fourth most polluted city in the World as per a WHO study;

(b) whether as a first step Government would eliminate tetralead from petrol as is being done in the West by addition of 10-20 per cent alcohol and as was being done in India during World War II; and

(c) whether a Task Force of concerned health NGOs and citizens would be set up in Delhi to serve as a v/atch-dog on environment pollution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Ministry of Petroleum has been asked to bring down the lead content in petrol to 0. 15 gm|litre by April, 1993.

(c) There is no proposal to have such a task force to serve as a watch-dog on en vironmental pollution. However, an Envi ronmental Protection Council has been set up by the Delhi Administration prima rily to review the work relating to environ mental protection and to advise on envi ronmental issues. This Council has repre sentatives of NGOs on it.

National Park in the Country

718. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of ENVRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some more national parks in the country have been put on IUCNs threatened list and if so, the details thereof and the corrective steps proposed in this regard (Times of India dated the 30th November, 1990); and

(b) whether it is also a fact that a i number of the medicinal plants have be-